What is claimed is:

1	1. A work-management method comprising:
2	determining a probability of availability at a future point in time
3	of each of a plurality of resources;
4	combining the probabilities to obtain a number; and
5	using the number to schedule new tasks for the resources for
6	the future point in time.

1	2. The method of claim 1 wherein:
2	using comprises
3	scheduling for the future point in time no more than the number
4	of the new tasks to become available for servicing by the plurality of the
5	resources.

1	3. The method of claim 1 wherein:
2	combining comprises
3	summing the probabilities to obtain the number.

1	4. The method of claim 1 wherein
2	determining comprises
3	for each of the resources, determining an amount of time t that
4	the resource has been servicing a task by now;
5	for each of the resources, determining a probability $F(t+h)$ of
6	the resource servicing its task to completion within a total amount of time
7	$t+h$;
8	for each of the resources, determining a probability $F(t)$ of the
9	resource completing servicing its task by now; and
10	for each of the resources, determining a probability P that the
11	resource will complete servicing its task at the future point in time an

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12   amount of time h from now as $\dfrac{F(t+h)-F(t)}{1-F(t)}$.

1   5. The method of claim 1 in a call center wherein:

2   tasks comprise calls; and

3   scheduling comprises

4   in response to P, determining whether or not to initiate or

5   cancel an outbound call.

1   6. A work-management method comprising:

2   determining an amount of time t that a resource has been

3   servicing a task by now;

4   determining a probability $F(t+h)$ of the resource servicing the

5   task to completion within a total amount of time $t+h$;

6   determining a probability $F(t)$ of the resource completing

7   servicing the task by now;

8   determining a probability P that the resource will complete

9   servicing the task within an amount of time h from now as $\dfrac{F(t+h)-F(t)}{1-F(t)}$;

10   and

11   in response to P, scheduling another task for servicing.

1   7. The method of claim 6 wherein:

2   scheduling comprises

3   in response to P, determining whether or not to initiate said

4   another task.

1   8. The method of claim 6 in a call center wherein:

2   tasks comprise calls; and

3   scheduling comprises

4   in response to P, determining whether or not to initiate an

5   outbound call.

1   9. The method of claim 6 further comprising:

2   performing the determining steps for a plurality of resources,

3   and

4   determining a number of the resources that will likely have

5   completed servicing their respective tasks within the amount of time h

6   from now as a sum of the probabilities P determined for individual ones of

7   the plurality of resources; wherein

8   scheduling comprises

9   in response to determining the number of the resources,

10   scheduling new tasks for servicing.

1   10. The method of claim 9 wherein:

2   scheduling tasks for servicing comprises scheduling no more

3   than the number of the tasks for servicing.

1   11. The method of claim 6 wherein:

2   determining a probability $F(t+h)$ comprises

3   obtaining historical task-completion statistics, and

4   from the obtained statistics determining the probability $F(t+h)$;

5   and

6   determining a probability $F(t)$ comprises

7   from the obtained statistics determining the probability $F(t)$.

1   12. The method of claim 11 wherein:

2   obtaining historical task-completion statistics comprises

3   obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically spent by

4   resources on servicing tasks to completion.

1   13. The method of claim 6 wherein:

2   determining a probability $F(t+h)$ comprises

3   obtaining historical task-completion statistics,

4   fitting the task-completion statistics into a lifetime closed-form

5   cumulative-probability distribution to determine parameters of the

6   distribution, and

7   evaluating the distribution with the determined parameters and

8   the total amount of time $t+h$ to obtain $F(t+h)$; and

9   determining a probability $F(t)$ comprises

10   evaluating the distribution with the determined parameters and

11   the amount of time t to obtain $F(t)$.

1   14. The method of claim 13 wherein:

2   obtaining historical task-completion statistics comprises

3   obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically spent by

4   resources on servicing tasks to completion;

5   the cumulative-probability distribution F comprises a Weibull

6   distribution; and

7   the parameters comprise a dispersion parameter and a

8   parameter of central tendency.

1   15. The method of claim 6 wherein:

2   determining an amount of time t comprises

3   determining the amount of time t that the resource has been

4   servicing a task of one of a plurality of different types of tasks; and

5   determining historical task-completion statistics comprises

6   determining the historical task-completion statistics for the one

7   type of tasks.

1   16. The method of claim 6 wherein:

2   scheduling another task comprises

3   in response to *P* initiating preparation of a task that may require

4   servicing by an agent at a later time.

1   17. The method of claim 6 wherein:

2   determining a probability *F(t+h)* comprises

3   obtaining a historical histogram for task completion, and

4   evaluating a cumulative said probability with the obtained

5   histogram for the total amount of time *t+h* to obtain *F(t+h)*; and

6   determining a probability *F(t)* comprises

7   evaluating the cumulative probability with the obtained

8   histogram for the amount of time *t* to obtain *F(t)*.

1   18. The method of claim 6 wherein:

2   scheduling comprises

3   in response to *P*, canceling preparation of a task that could

4   require servicing by a resource.

1   19. An apparatus that effects the method of one of claims 1-18.

1   20. A computer-readable medium containing instructions

2   which, when executed in a computer, cause the computer to perform the

3   method of one of claims 1-18.

1   21. A work-management apparatus comprising:

2   means for determining a probability of availability at a future

3   point in time of each of a plurality of resources;

4   means cooperative with the determining means for combining

5   the probabilities to obtain a number; and

6   means cooperative with the combining means for scheduling

7   for the future point in time no more than the number of new tasks for

8   servicing by the plurality of the resources.

1   22. A work-management apparatus comprising:

2   means for determining an amount of time t that a resource has

3   been servicing a task by now;

4   means cooperative with the time-determining means for

5   determining a probability $F(t+h)$ of the resource servicing the task to

6   completion within a total amount of time $t+h$;

7   means cooperative with the time-determining means for

8   determining a probability $F(t)$ of the resource completing servicing the task

9   by now;

10   means cooperative with both of the probability-determining

11   means for determining a probability P that the resource will complete

12   servicing the task within an amount of time h from now as $\dfrac{F(t+h)-F(t)}{1-F(t)}$;

13   and

14   means cooperative with the P-determining means and

15   responsive to P for scheduling another task for servicing.